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ABSTRACT

British English and Nepali monophthongs (pure vowels) are analyzed and compared in terms of their distinctive features, and pedagogical implications for Nepali learners of English as a Second Language are discussed. First, the two vowel systems are outlined and described in terms of eight distinctive features: vowel height, backness, lip rounding, vocality, nasality, vowel length, periphery, and tensity. Distribution of the vowels in initial, medial, and final positions are charted in each language. Difficulties encountered by Nepali learners of English are enumerated, and suggestions for pronunciation instruction are made. Difficulties include inconsistent or non-correspondence of grapheme to phoneme in English, and problems in understanding the distinction between long and short vowels. Exercises and tests for pronunciation practice are offered, including comparison of minimal pairs, phoneme discrimination tests, identification of similar-sounding words, identification of different-sounding words, matching phonemes with words, dictation, contextual practice, games, spelling/pronunciation generalizations, oral repetition, identification of individual phonemes in a spoken or written word, identification of vowel/consonant sequences, and distinction between contrastive and complementary distribution. (MSE)

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English and Nepali Monophthongs: A comparison

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Abstract

Nepali monophthongs (pure vowels) are underinvestigation. The findings so far have occasioned more controversy than not. Some phoneticians, for example, suggest that there are nine monophthongs in Nepali whereas others claim that it has only six. The descriptions of mononphthongs have been similarly acutely controversial.

In this paper, Nepali monophthongs, based on their most popular descriptions are compared with (British) English monophthongs. The purpose of the comparison is to point out the differences and similarities, to elucidate the difficulties the Nepali learners of English are likely to face, and for that matter the English speakers may face while learning Nepali, and to enumerate some of the pedagogical implications these differences and similarities may have. The paper also suggests some tests and exercises that are helpful in dealing with the differences which may cause problems in learning the target monophthongs.

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ENGLISH AND NEPALI MONOPHTHONGS: A COMPARISON

INTRODUCTION

The Nepali Language

About a thousand years ago, Nepali used to be Khasa Bhasa, a dialect of the Khasa group of people. Before it became their language, it is believed that the Khasa Bhasa was creolized from the dialects of the local people and from that of the Aryans [now North Indians] who invaded and settled in the Northwestern part of Nepal. Soon it became the official language of a tiny kingdom called Shinjali Rajya. Shinjali Rajya used to have a strong military force and it often helped its friendly nations at war against other nations [Nepal used to be more than 50 such nations in the past, each with its own language] by sending its soldiers to fight for them.

It is in this way that Khasa Bhasa invaded other nations. When His Late Majesty Prithvi Narayan Shah [now called father of the nation], then king of Gurkha state, conquered those tiny kingdoms to unite them into a bigger country what we call today Nepal some 250 years ago, the Khasa Bhasa became a popular medium to spread out his messages. At the outset, it served as a Lingua Franca, but soon it was taken for granted as the official language of Nepal, and thus it became Nepali. Since then, it has been the national and the only official language of Nepal. In fact, Nepali still serves as a Lingua Franca among the various linguistic and ethnic groups of Nepal.

Sanskrit is considered to be the mother language of Nepali. Most of the sounds, lexis and the sentence patterns come from it. But in the last two hundred years Nepali has gone under radical transformations, and as a result several significant changes have taken place in its phonology,

morphology and syntax. Sanskrit, for example, notes three degrees of vowel length whereas modern Nepali recommends only one.

As far as its phonology is concerned, To the most part, it is still underinvestigation, and the findings and classifications, so far, have occasioned controversy among the Nepalese linguists. The credit for pioneering works in this area goes to T.W. Clark for his book **Introduction to Nepali,** R.L. Turner for his **Dictionary of the Nepali Language;** both foreigners, and to Bandhu, et al. for their **Nepali Segmental phonology.**

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

In this paper I attempt to analyze English and Nepali monophthongs in terms of distinctive features, make a comparison between them, and then point out some of the pedagogical implications with respect to Nepali learners of English.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. This work has been library oriented. The basis of this work has been the related books and journals available in the local libraries.
2. Observations on the English monophthongs have been based on the Received Pronunciation [British, London variety] of English as revealed in the books and journals given under 'reference and bibliography'. Wherever appropriate, a description for the monophthongs in American English is provided.
3. The phonetic symbols used are the ones suggested by Daniel Jones [English Pronouncing Dictionary, Cambridge, W. Heffer and Sons Ltd. 1986].

4. Observations on Nepali monophthongs are impressionistic in nature and based on the variety spoken in and around Kathmandu, the capital city.

MONOPHTHONGS : GENERAL REMARKS

Monophthongs are also known as pure vowels. A pure vowel may be defined as a voiced sound in forming of which the air issues in a continuous stream [free flow] through the pharynx, there being no narrowing to cause audible friction [Jones, 1962: 23, Anderson & Stageberg, 1975:169; Christopherson 1970:25].

For the production of pure vowels, the tongue remains at one position for a considerable amount of time. No movement in the tongue, therefore , is noticed. Any movement of the tongue during the articulation of a monophthong produces a complex vowel [a diphthong]. As Mr. Pradhan [1969] puts it:

> "A vowel is a voiced sound produced without any obstruction in the mouth and accompanied by any frictional noise" [P-5].

English has the following monophthongs:

/i:, i, e, æ , a:, o, o:, u:, u, ə, ə: , ʌ /

In the American English, however, long sounds such as /i:/, /e/, /u:/ and /o:/ are realized with a slight movement of the articulators. In the case of front vowels /i:/ and /e/, it is the tongue that moves, whereas, in the case of back vowels /u:/ and /o:/, it is the lips. By the virtue of the glides, these sounds are not considered as pure vowels but complex vowels and are represented as /iy/, /ey/, /uw/ and /ow/ respectively.

Nepali monophthongs are: / i, e, a, o, u, ɔ /

Pradhan [1969] records nine monophthongs in Nepali. A careful look at the book, however, rerveals the fact that his identifications and classifications has been baseless, incorrect and in some cases borrowed from another language. For example, vowel number 6 which he defines as half-open central vowel and represnts by the reversed letter of , does not exist in Nepali at all. Furthermore, Pradhan's work is based on Nepali that is spoken in Darjeeling and is under heavy influence of Hindi and Bengali.

Two years later, Bandhu, et al. [1971] published their brief work on Nepali phonoilogy in which they positted six (pure) vowels [P-36]. This work has been one of the most popular work in the field of Nepali segmerntal phonology.

Variants:

It is possible to realize several variations of the same monophthong, depending on the sound combination and other linguistic environments. But as they are not significantly distinctive, they are not discussed in this paper. However, whenever important, the pedagogical implications on such variants are suggested.

The terms **monophthongs** and **vowels** have been used interchangeably in this paper.

Contrast

Vowel contrasts in Nepali can be seen in the following groups of words:

Group 1

pis	(grind)	pas	(enter)
pes	(present document)	pos	(nourish)
pās	(passing grade)	pus	(ninth month of Nepali year)
sir	(head)	sar	(move)
ser	(unit of measure)	sor	(tune)
sār	(shift)	sur	(outside corner)
cik	(have intercourse)	cak	(chalk)
cek	(cheque)	cok	(square)
cak	(hive or buttocks)	cuk	(sour)

Group 2

khir	(rice pudding)	khar	(thaching grass)
kher	(interrogate)	khor	(pig pen)
khar	(punget fumes)	khur	(hoof)
khil	(clip)	khal	(mortar)
khel	(play)	khol	(cause)
khāl	(kinds, types)	khul	(be opened)

Similarly, vowel contrasts in English can be shown by giving examples such as:

kid	cad
card	curd
cod	cord
could	cooed
cud	coup
fill	feel
bud	bird

In English, the vowel length is also contrastive in the words such as sit and seat, full and fool, and cod and cord, etc. In Nepali, however, vowel length does not contrast. This is discussed later in this paper.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Distinctive features which are also known as **basic vowels parameters** (Lindau 1978: 541) are a set of features or characteristics which serve to distinguish one sound segment from another[Jones 1962: 51]. The distinctive features that have been used for analyzing vowels are listed below together with their correlates and respective values.

Features	Correlates	Values
1.vowel height	highest point of the tongue	- close [Am. high] - half close [upper mid] - half open [lower mid] - open [low]
2. backness	part of the tongue that is activated	- front - center - back
3. lip rounding	lip protrusion or shape created by lips	- rounded - neutral - spread
4. vocality [voicing]	shape of the glottis (state of the vocal cords)	- voiceless - voiced
5. nasality	state of the velum	- nasalized - oral or non-nasalized
6. length	duration	- long - half long - short
7. periphery	amount of centralization on the acoustic chart	- peripheral - central
8. tensity	muscular tension of the tongue	- tense - lax

Vowel Height

Customarily, vowel heights are represented in some sort of diagrams. Such a diagram represents more or less accurately the position or the elevation of the tongue for each of the vowels placed in the diagram.

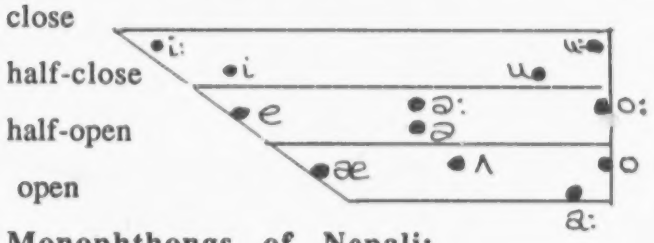
The vowels positted in each of the alevated positions are known as Cardinal Vowels. These Cardinal Vowels do not belong to any particular language. The are vowel sounds with known acoustic qualities and known lip and tongue positions. Vowels of a language, their positions and their qualities are judged in relation to these Cardinal Vowels. Thus any vowel sound with a tongue position that comes close to the Caridinal Vowel sound /i:/ or /u:/, that is with the tongue raised high up in the mouth is a close vowel. A vowel with tongue position that comes close to the Cardinal Vowel /a:/, is an open vowel.

Some phoneticians often correlate vowel heights with the opening of the jaws and movements of the tongue to different points [West 1960:49; Jones 1962: 38]. These points are, however, purely hypothetical and are used for descriptive purposes only. Vowels are described in terms of four such points:

1. The open position: When the tongue remains lying flatly behind the lower teeth. The vowels produced with this position of the tongue are called **open vowels.**
2. The half-open position: When the tongue is raised to the point so that one-third of the mouth passage is closed. The vowels produced are **half-open vowels.**
3. The half-close position: The tongue moves up to a point so that two-third of the mouth passage is closed. The vowels are called **Half-close vowels.**
4. The close position: The tongue is raised to a point so that it is almost touching the ridge. The vowels produced are called **close vowels.**

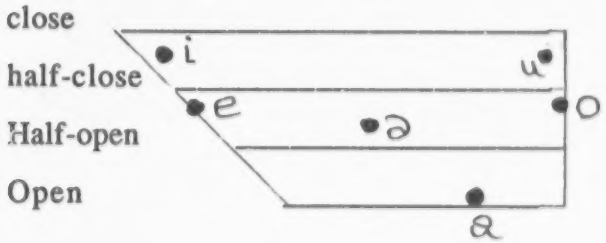
Monophthongs of English:

English has twelve monophthongs. The monophthongs and their respective heights are shown in the diagram below:



Monophthongs of Nepali:

Nepali has six monophthongs. Their heights are shown in the diagram below:



Observations:

1. Nepali /i/,/u/,/a/ and/ ə / hold almost the same tongue heights as English /i:/, /u:/, /a:/ and /ə/.
2. Nepali /e/ and /o / are relatively higher than English /e/ and /o/.
3. English long vowels are higher than their short counterparts [short vowels].
4. English has four vowels between half-open and open, Nepali has only one.

BACKNESS

For the convenience of studying the sound system of a language, especially vowels, the tongue is hypothetically divided into three parts- **Back, Middle,** and **Front.** The part that lies opposite the soft palate is the back of the tongue; the part that lies opposite the alveolar ridge and the fore part of the hard palate is called front; and the part between the front and the back parts of the tongue is the middle or center of the tongue.

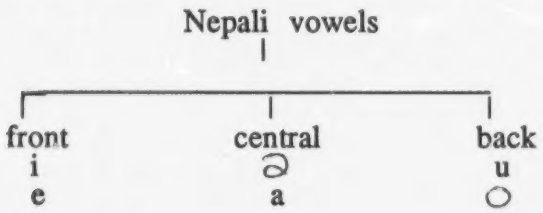
Vowels of a language is classified and described according to the part of the tongue that is elevated for the articulation of the individual sounds. The vowels, for example, which are articulated with the elevation of the front part of the tongue are called **front vowels,** the vowels that are produced with the elevation of the central part of the tongue are called **central vowels,** and the vowels for which the back of the tongue is elevated are called **back vowels.**

English has four front vowels, three central vowels and five back vowels:

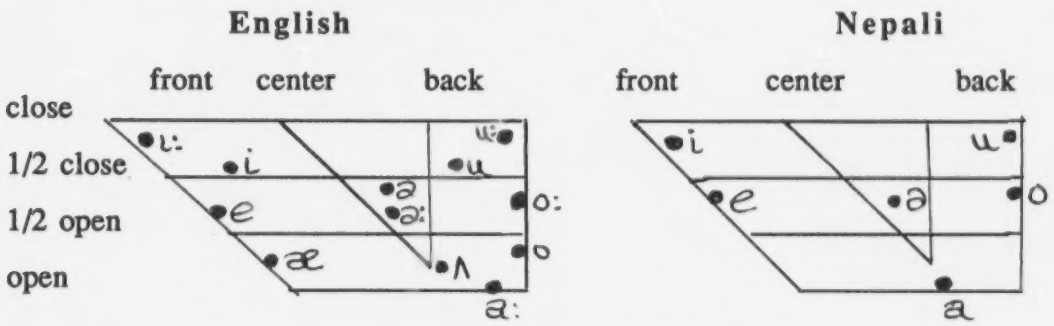
English vowels

Front	Central	Back
i:	ə:	u
i	ə	u:
e	ʌ	ɔ
æ		ɔ:
		a:

Nepali has two front, two central and two back vowels:



The pure vowels may be represented in the two-dimensional vowel space chart in the following way:



Observations:

1. .English /i/ and /u/ are slightly centralized.
2. Nepali /i/ , /u/ and /ə / hold almost the same positions as English /i:/, /u:/, and /ə /.
3. Nepali /a/ is centralized, whereas the English /a:/ is a back vowel.

In American English, the high tense vowels are realized with a slight palatalization, and therefore, diphthongization. They are represented as /iy/ and /uw/ respectively. Prator, et al. 1972 :198]. The sound /a/ is a central sound, not a back one and is common in monosyllabic words spelt with "o" as in pot, stop, hot, etc. in the case of which British English observes /o/. American English observes only one vowel schwa in the mid-central position with three variants-an unstressed schwa for a weak sound,

a stressed schwa for /ʌ/ and a stressed schwa before 'r' for /ə:/. /æ/ and /ɔ/ are considered to be low sounds. /a/ is often realized with 'a' in monosyllabic words such as dance, half, bath, class, etc. In British English, these words are realized with the back open vowel /a:/

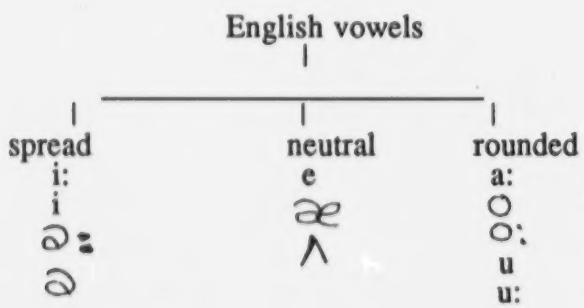
Lip-rounding

The movements of the jaw also influence the position of the lips. The positions of the lips are important because the shape and the opening of the lips affect, the quality of vowels to a considerable extent [Christophersen 1970:19, Jones 1962: 39].

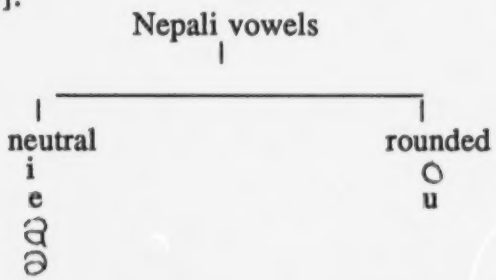
The lips may be spread, rounded or neutral. The vowels that are produced with the spread lips or neutral lips are usually grouped together under the term **unrounded.**

Rounded vowels are further distinguished as close-rounded or open- rounded vowels.

English is said to have four spread, three neutral and five rounded vowels:



Nepali has only two classifications of vowels in terms of lip-rounding [see also Kostic 1975]:



Observations:

1. central vowels /ə:/ and /ə/are called neutral vowels [Christopherson 1970: 56].

2. Spread short vowels /i/ and /ə/ are slightly neutralized; Nepali /i/ and /ə/ are mostly neutral.

3. Front vowels are naturally unrounded and back vowels are naturally rounded. The reason for this is that the maximal acoustic distance in the front back dimension is obtained be maximizing the mouth opening for front vowels, and minimizing it for back vowels.

4. The degree of rounding is to a large extent related to vowel height, i.e; the higher the back vowel ; the closer the rounding.

5. Compression [a lip position in which the upper and lower lips approach each other to form a narrow slit] increases with the increasing heights of the tongue.

6. Central vowels are mostly unrounded.

7. English /a:/ is rounded whereas Nepali /a/ is neutral. In American English /a/ is realized as a low front-central unrounded[neutral] vowel.

8. Nepali /o/ and /u/, as English /o/ and /u/ are rounded.

Vocality or Voicing

In the production of monophthongs, the role of vocal cords is crucial. The vocal cords may be held apart so that the air passes without obstruction [open glottis]. The resulting sounds are voiceless sounds. This is the normal state of the vocal cords while one is breathing. They may also be held loosely together allowing vibration in them when the air passes through them. The sounds produced in this way are voiced sounds. The vocal cords may also be closed completely [glottal stop or closed glottis]. The feature of voicing is not relevant in the discussion of vowels because all English [Anderson/Stageberg 1975:169] and Nepali monophthongs are voiced. The voice quality, however, is subject to stress, degree of emphasis and the linguistic context of the vowel.

As for whispers, vowels are devoiced to produce a whisper [Christophersen 1970: 25]. "If the false vocal cord are drawn towards each other leaving only a narrow space for the air to pass between them, the resulting sound is one variety of whisper" [Jones 1962: 82].

Nasality

The movement of the soft palate may also determine the quality of vowel. In normal articulation of vowels of English, the soft palate is raised so that it touches the back of the pharynx. As a result of this raising, no air passes through the nose. The sounds produced in this way are called **oral** sounds. During the production of a vowel, it is, however, possible to lower the soft palate so that the air passes through the nose as well as the mouth. The produced sounds are, then, **nasal** sounds.

In phonetic writing [transcription], nasalization is expressed be the symbol [~] which is placed over the sound that is nasalized.

English vowels are oral [Anderson/ Stageberg 1975: 169]. Nasalization is a phonetic process in which 'nasalized vowels occur phonetically in the environment of nasal consonants' [Lindau 1978: 557].

In Nepali, vowels may frequently be nasalized. The nasalization differentiates between meanings:

bās	'shelter'	bã̄s	'bamboo'
rādi	'rug'	rãdi	[abuse]
phāt	'tear'	phãt	'wide area'
āe	'they came'	aẽ	'I came'
ta	'then'	tã	'thou'
tāti	'she became angry'	tãti	'group of insects'
Kāth	'wood'	kãth	'suburbs'
bhet	'reach'	bhẽt	'gift'
besi	'more'	bẽsi	'low land'

Observations:

1. Every vowel of Nepali may be nasalized.
2. Nasalization in English is allophonic, one that occurs in the process of assimilation.
3. Nasalization in Nepali is phonemic.

Vowel Length

For the purpose of practical study, vowels are distinguished in terms of their degrees of length [sometimes termed as quantity; Christophersen, 1970: 39]. When two degrees are distinguished, they are known as **long** and **short**. When it is desired to distinguish an intermediate degree, it is termed **half-long** or medium.

The mark of length is [:] and is placed immediately after the symbol for the sound which is long, half-long is marked {.}, and short sounds are generally left unmarked. That is to say, the colon [:] indicates that the vowel is long. In pronouncing a long vowel, the tongue is kept steady for a while in the same position, and the sound is produced for a good deal longer than for a short vowel.

English is said to have five long vowels and seven short vowels:

English vowels

long	short
i:	i
a:	æ
ɔ:	e
ə:	u
u:	o

Vowel length in Nepali has always been a subject of controversy. Paniniya, the earlier scholar of Sanskrit has considered three types of vowel length-long, half-long, and short. But according to Clark [1977], there are only half-long and short vowels in Nepali.

To-date, it is generally accepted that Nepali vowels are only half-long, thereby, taking the intermediate degree between long and short. Nepali vowels, therefore, should be marked with [.], but as all vowels are half-long, they are left here unmarked.

The vowel forms **raswa** which supposedly represent a short sound is indicated by the symbol for ु for /i, u/ and **dirgha** supposedly represent a long sound and is indicated by for ू are observed in the written form only.

दिन	[din =day]	फुल	[phul=egg]	सुन	[sun= hear]
दीन	[deen=poor]	फूल	[phool=lower]	सून	[soon=gold]

Observations

1. Vowel length in English depends on the stress, degree of emphasis, position of the vowel in a word, linguistic environment, and also rhythm and speed in speech.

2. Vowel length is phonemic in English and allophonic in Nepali. So, there is no long /i:/ vurses short /i/, long /u:/ vurses short /u/, long /ɔ:/ vurses short /ɔ/, etc. in Nepali.

3. The long vowels are relatively shorter when followed by a voiceless consonant than when followed by a voiced consonant.

short [relatively]	long
seat	seed
cart	card

4. The long vowels are relatively shorter before a nasal or lateral consonant followed in tern by voiceless consonant:

short [relatively]	long
fault	fall
learnt	learn

5. Long vowels in stressed syllables are relatively shorter if an unstressed syllable follows it immediately:

short [relatively]	long
leader	lead
seeing	see
causes	cause
drawing	draw

6. Long vowels are shorter in unstressed syllables than in stressed ones:

/ɔ:/ in au'dacious is shorter than /ɔ:/ in 'August.

7. English short vowels are also subject to certain variations of length. The short vowels are slightly longer before voiced consonants than before voiceless consonants:

shorter	longer
back	bag
cap	cab
let	led
fit	fill

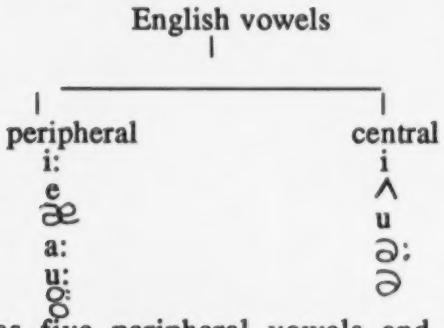
8. Nepali nasalized vowels are slightly longer than their non-nasalized counterparts. It is said that Nepali nasalized vowels are as long as English long vowels

American linguists do not use long versus short parameters to distinguish between long and short sounds. In stead it uses a different terminology to make this differentiation. The five sounds which are basic and fundamental are termed as name sounds. They are-/i,e,o,u,a/ which are often accompanied by diphthongization [Lindau 1978:557] except in the sound /a/. The base sounds are /I, ɛ ,æ, U , ə /. Another set of parameters used to make a distinction is tense versus lax.

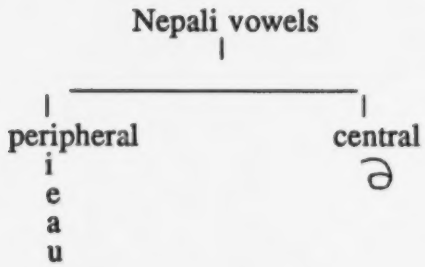
Periphery

Vowels may be distinguished in terms of the amount of centralization on the acoustic chart. The vowels that occur at the margin of the chart are called peripheral vowels, and the vowels that occur toward the center of the chart are said to be central.

English has seven peripheral vowels and five central:



Nepali has five peripheral vowels and only one central:



Observations:

1. English long and tense vowels are more peripheral [Lindau, 1978: 557].
2. Short and lax vowels are more central.
3. The only central vowel of Nepali is the schwa.

In American English, there are only two central vowels / ə / and /a/. Stressed /ə/ includes / ɜ / and / ʌ / of British English respectively.

Tensity

Tensity is another important element that affect the quality of vowels. Tensity is the muscular tension in the tongue. Certain vowels are produced by building sufficient contraction or tension in the tongue, others are produced with relatively relaxed muscles. *"Tense vowels are those which are supposed to require considerable muscular tension on the part of the tongue; lax vowels are those in which the tongue is supposed to be held loosely* [Jones 1962: 39].

Tensity can be realized by touching the lower part of the chin [toward the neck] with the thumb and producing the sound.

English has five tense vowels and seven lax:

English vowels

tense	lax
i: ɔ:	i ʌ
a: ə:	e æ
u:	u ɔ
	ə

Long vowels are tense and short lax [Lindau 1978: 557, Avery/Ehrlich 1987]

Tense vowels are produced slightly higher in the mouth than their lax counterparts.

Since Nepali vowels are half-long, some tension can be realized in all vowels--comparatively more in / a/, and less in / ə /. In American English, name sounds are often tense and base sounds lax.

Distribution of Nepali and English vowels

English	Initial	Medial	Final
/i:/	eels	seed	see
/i/	it	sit	city
/e/	else	set	-
/æ/	ass	mass	-
/ʌ/	up	cup	-
/a:/	art	heart	car
/ o/	oxide	dock	-
/o: /	all	call	war
/u/	-	put	to
/u:/	ooze	soon	two

/ə/	along	activity	father
/ə:/	early	girl	fur

Nepali

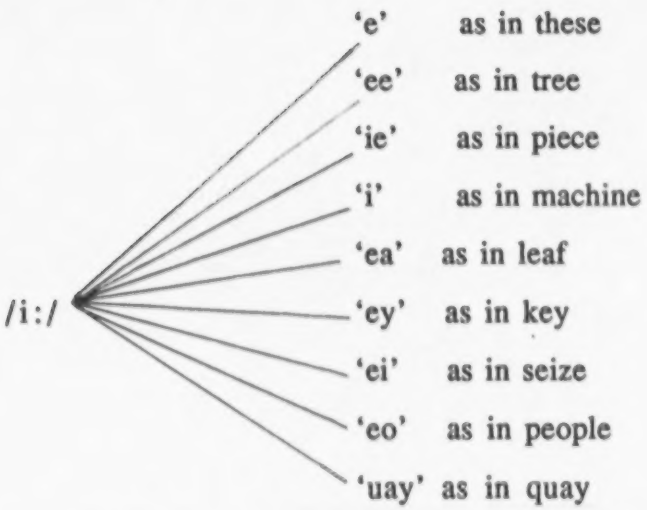
/i/	ispāt (steel)	itihās (history	eti (this much)
/e/	eti this much)	pareli (eye lash)	pahile (before)
/a/	ās (hope)	bās (shelter)	bā (father)
/o/	oth (lip)	thok (hit)	mitho (tasty)
/u/	uth (stand up)	thuk (spit)	chakku (knife)
/ə/	anār (pomogranate)	bas (sit)	chakra (wheel)

Observations

1. In English all vowels occur in all positions except /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/ and /ɔ/ which do not occur word finally.
2. The vowel /u/ does not occur word initially in English.
3. Vowels in Nepali occur freely in the intial, medial, and final positions.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS: A

There is essentially one to one correspondence between Nepali symbols and the sounds they represent. Nepali learners of English often find it difficult to deal with English spellings because several spellings or sequences of spellings may represent one sounds or one spelling may represent several sounds. For example, the sound /i:/ can be represented by as many as seven different spellings or sequence of spellings:



They are, therefore, likely to think that English spelling system is chaotic. A careful treatment is needed to help them master the sound as well the orthographic systems with a special concentration on vowels.

As there are no long and short vowels in Nepali, Nepali learners of Nepali fail to make distinction between /i:/ and /i/, / ɔ: / and / ɔ /, /u:/ and /u/ and / ə :/ and / ə /. They often pronounce "sheep" and "ship", "court "and "cot", 'short' and 'shot'"full" and "fool" in the same way. The sound /ə:/ is the most difficult one for them.

Nepali learners of English do not make differentiation between /e/ and / æ /. The words "bed "and "bad", therefore. may sound the same in their mouth.

The second most difficult sound is / ʌ /. They often confuse this sound with / ə / and /a/.

Nepali learners tend to make /u/ tense. In the case of / ɔ /, they do not make it wide open.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS: B

For vowel length, the beginners should be told to make distinction between short and their long counterparts with caution. Comparable examples or minimal pairs may prove to be promising to make them see the difference.

The concept of laxness and tenseness may help them to realize the length of vowels.

Another important concept for the realization of the length of vowels may be the concept of " fortis": and "lenis" consonants. "ESL learners often have difficulty in distinguishing between voiced stops and voiceless ones in word final positions. Teaching students to lengthen vowels before voiced stops [lenis] may be helpful "[Avery/ Ehrlich 1987]. They can be taught, for example, that:

V+ Vd. C= long relatively

V+ Vl.C = short "

The idea of distribution of vowels may also be helpful. It is, for example , helpful to tell them that:

[i] /a:/, /o:/, /u/,/u:/ and /ə :/ do not occur before /n/;

[ii] /ə / is normal with an unaccented /i/ or with the weak form of the function words; and

[iii] sounds /e/,/ʌ /,/ o/ do not occur word finally, and vowel /u/ does not occur initially.

Some articulation guidelines can help them produce the vowels more accurately. Students may practice as u:ə: u:ə: u:ə: with corners of the mouth move horizontally or i:ə:i:ə: əi:ə : i: ə : keeping the lips stationary in the spread position. The vowel /æ/ is an intermediate quality between

/e/ and /a:/; and vowel /ʌ/ is half-way between / ə:/ and /a:/. For vowel /o/ the tongue must be held as low as and as far back as possible. For /o:/ the tongue holds higher position accompanied be close lip-rounding. For /æ/ they may practice with the mouth wide-open and imitate baaing the sheep.

Exercises and Tests for practicing pronunciation:

1. Minimal pairs:[to enable the students to see the difference between the sounds:

hit	heat
cut	card

2. Phoneme discrimination tests [to enable them to differentiate between sounds]:

They listen carefully and find out the word that has a different sound. If A is different they write A in the space provided, if B is different, they write B, if it's C they write C. If none of them is different then they write zero [0].

A	B	C	
sheep	ship	sheep	_____
bird	bud	bird	_____

3. Writing a word containing the **same sound** as the word on the left [to help them find similar sounding words]:

A. first, shirt, hurt,.....

4. Odd-man-out[to enable them to make phoneme differentiation]:

A. taught, brought, out.

5. Match the following[to help them realize a sound in a given word]:

Group A	Group B
i:	hurt
I	hit
u:	cook
u	soup
ɔ:	heat
	juice, etc.

6. Dictation [to enable them grasp sounds through listening]

7. Contextual Practice [to enable them to learn the sounds in spoken [conversational] English

8. Games [to make the learning of sounds fun]

9. Spellings / Pronunciation [to enable them to make generalizations about spellings and the sounds they represent.

10. **Look and Say Exercise**: In this exercise the students look at the words given and pronounce them.

11. **Listen and Repeat Exercise:** In this exercise, the students repeat they word they hear either from the teacher of from a tape recorder.

12. **Listen and Indicate the number of phonemes:** In this exercise, the students listen to the words spoken by the teacher or from a rape recorder and write down the number of phones they hear in each case.

13. **Read and Indicate the nember of phonemes:** The students in this exercise are supplied with words which they read and write down the number of phonemes each word has.

14. **Write down the sequence of phonemes** in term of C for consonant and V for vowel. Examples of this ecercise will be:

word	phoneme sequence
street	CCCVC
Past	CVCC

15. Indicate whether the sounds are in the **contrastive distribution** or **complemetary distribution.** The teacher will explain what is meant by contrastive distribution and by complementary distribution, and then give students pairs of words in which phonemes are either in the contrastive distribution or in the complimentary distribution. For Example:

<u>Pair 1</u>	Contrastive	Coplementary
time		
dime		
The initial consonants in pair 1,	.....X.....	.....
<u>Pair 2</u>		
pot		
spot		
The /p/ sounds in the second pair	.....	.....X.....

16. Circle the sounds you hear: The students in this exercise listen to the words spoken by the teacher and then circle the sounds they hear on a chart. For example:

They hear	chart				
	1	2	3	4	5
shoe	s	sh	ʃ	u	u:
mess	m	e	a	s	ʃ
etc					

Summary:

symbol	height			backness				lip-round	long	muscular tension	distribution			voicing
	hi	mid	low	f	r	œ	bk				in	m	f	
ENGLISH														
i:	+			+				-	+	+				+
i		+		+				-	-	-				+
e		+		+				-	-	-			-	+
æ		+		+				_	_	-				+
a:			+				+	slight	+	+				+
o		+					+	+	_	-			-	+
o:		+					+	+	+	+				+
u		+					+	+	-	-	-			+
u:	+						+	+	+	+				+
ə:		+			+			-	+	+				+
ə		+			+			_	-	-				+
ʌ		+			+			_	-	_			_	+
Nepali														
i	+			+				-	intermdt	partially	free distri.			+
e		+		+				-	"	"	"			+
a			+			+		-	"	"	"			+
o		+					+	+	"	"	"			+
u	+						+	+	"	"	"			+
ə		+				+		-	"	"	"			+

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